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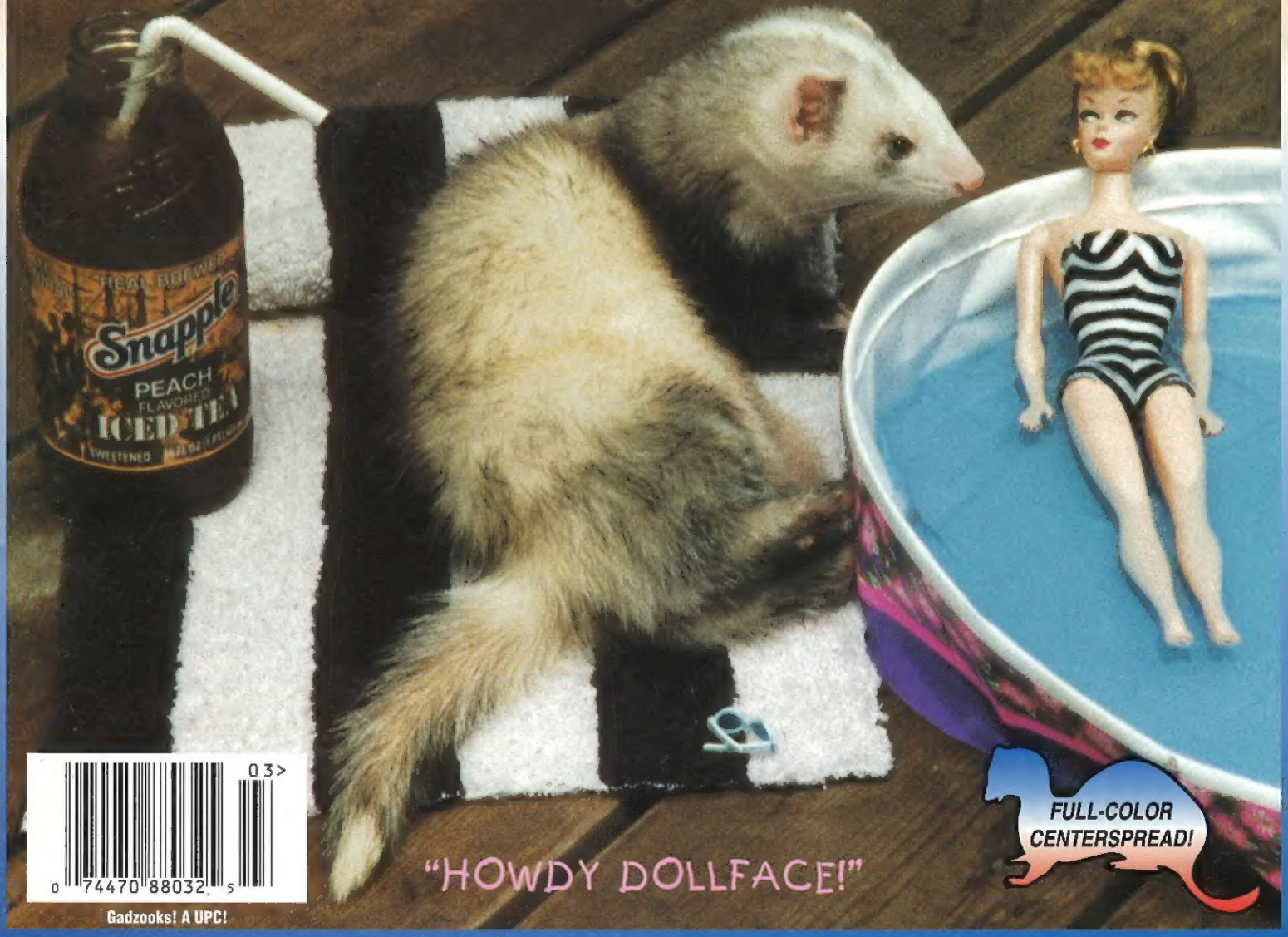

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Vol. 1 No. 3

For ferret owners. By ferret owners.™

it's easy to be first, when you care...

We've been working very hard for a long time to try to reach ferret owners, so it came as quite a shock when suddenly, ferret owners were trying to find us! As you well know, we're the first color ferret magazine to successfully launch and we've done it by keeping our costs to a minimum. We're just two people and four ferrets working hard to produce something great for ferrets and those who are owned by them. Our recent media madness, launched by a front-page story in the *New York Times* Metro Section written by Peter Marks, has plunged us into turmoil. We've been working on *Modern Ferret* for almost a year now, and have built it slowly by lots of word-of-mouth. We have done all we could to make our name and number accessible to ferret people (and we answer the phone almost 24 hours a day!). Suddenly the story was picked up across the nation of how we were taking on the big magazine guys in the pet industry (who have ignored ferrets for years). Ferret owners and would-be ferret owners have been seeking us. At first, our number wasn't even listed properly! The big magazine guys now want to muscle in with their corporate magazines and claim they were first (don't let them fool you with magazines featuring ferrets as rodents!). All we can do is say, "Sorry, big corporations. Ferrets now have a magazine produced by actual ferret owners — a magazine that addresses ferret owners as fellow friends." If this is your first time reading *Modern Ferret*, I'd like to welcome you aboard. Please continue to share the news with any fellow ferret owners you meet. Together we can make sure we take care of *our* fuzzies, *our* way. *For ferret owners. By ferret owners.*™

- Eric Shefferman

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Photo edits done in Adobe Photoshop
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Archive scans from Kodak Photo CD
Inspirational music listened to while working on this issue: **Green Day** & lots of calls from ferret lovers!
Inspirational TV: **The Dick Van Dyke Show** and **The Jon Stewart Show** (which will be missed)
Key Production Folks:
Sonic Graphic Systems (from scans to printing)

About your address label:
The little number next to the "EXP:" is the number of the last issue of your subscription. This way you can tell when you're getting near the last issue of your subscription (horror!). The best way to ensure that you never miss an issue of *Modern Ferret* is to make sure that you renew your subscription in a timely manner. We thought we should let you know. You should also give all your ferrets a big kiss and a hug till they get fidgety. They're waiting... go on... the magazine will still be waiting for you when you come back - we'll even save your place!

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Pink Noses™

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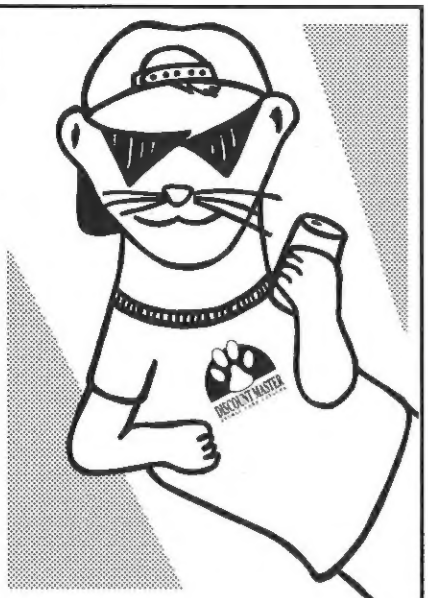

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Minding Your Own Business™

MARY & RALPH SABRINA

The Only Solution for Ignorance Is Education

What should you do if someone calls your ferret a rodent?* Calmly explain that the ferret is related to the weasel, the mink, and the otter, and is not a rodent. Misinformation about and misrepresentation of ferrets is everywhere. Even their classification as "small animals" leads people to lump ferrets in with guinea pigs, rabbits (I know, rabbits are lagomorphs), and gerbils. As ferret owners, we have to help the general public understand that ferrets are not like other small creatures. They're much more like dogs and cats (see what Ferrets, Inc. spokesferret Tommy is doing to help project a more accurate image of ferrets as domestic animals in the conclusion of the interview with Deborah Jeans).

How many times has someone asked you if ferrets bite? Next time, try offering the following information. According to the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* [JAVMA, 193(9):1031, 1988]: "Statistics from the Center [sic] for Disease Control and an article in the JAMA [Journal of the American Medical Association] indicate that the number of bites inflicted by ferrets appears to be substantially lower than those by dogs and cats. These statistics were compiled from 1978-1988 and were reported on a yearly basis: between 1 and 3 million dog bites, compared to 65 ferret bites in 10 years. Serious bite injuries were recorded as 44,000/year for dogs and 1.2/year for ferrets." When these data are corrected for the numbers of each animal, dogs are over 200 times more likely to bite than ferrets.

Ferrets and children are a somewhat controversial pair. Animals and small children should never be left alone together. No exceptions. To do so is an act of negligence. I wouldn't leave a child alone with some *people* — let alone an animal. Pam Grant touches on the subject of children and ferrets in the article about S.T.A.R. Ferrets. Check it out.

Positive publicity is key in the educational efforts of ferret groups and owners. *Modern Ferret* is no exception. Without straying too far from the subject of ferrets (after all, isn't a reporter a ferret of sorts?), I offer a huge thank you to Peter Marks of the *New York Times* Metro Section for writing a wonderful article about us. I want to thank him for painting a much-needed positive portrait of ferrets. But mostly, I want to thank him for fielding innumerable phone calls and putting our phone number on his voice mail so ferret owners could find us. We offer many sloppy ferret kisses from the kids.

We can all do our part to create positive and accurate press. Eric and I are working on even more positive ferret publicity (including the BBC and CNN!). The mere existence of a ferret magazine does a great deal to "legitimize" the ferret as a pet. The more people who know the facts about ferrets, the less likely our pets will be discriminated against or subject to restrictive legislation.

Finally, on the subject of legislation, congratulations to the ferrets and ferret owners of New Hampshire. On June 12, 1995, a bill was signed into law that provides for a 45-day, in-home quarantine for vaccinated ferrets that are involved in a biting incident. No more "kill and test." The law also requires that New Hampshire ferrets over 14 weeks of age be vaccinated against rabies. What's the policy where you live?

---

*Please note, I have nothing against rodents (I used to have guinea pigs, mice, and gerbils), but ferrets are not rodents. I have nothing against dogs either (as a toddler, I learned to walk with the help of Bruno — a St. Bernard). However, it is not logical to call ferrets unsuitable pets because they bite when it is documented that dogs bite more often.

Mary R. Shefferman

Pink Noses

&

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Winners of the Pink Noses™ photo contests in this issue (or Issue 1 or 2!) will receive a bottle of Ferret Glow® Shampoo and Deodorizer courtesy of Four Paws! To keep your ferret looking its best for those magic photo moments, use Four Paws Ferret Glow® Shampoo.

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This month's Pink Noses™ contributors:

1. Yuki Busch of Fort Collins CO presents Mythril.
2. Elizabeth Esteves of Peapack NJ presents Kelly.
3. Vikki Wise of Hartford City IN presents Zeke.
4. Stephanie & Gregory Jonas' ferret Oscar. Photo by Stephanie Jonas.
5. Megan Milligan of Evansville IN presents Jasper and Martin.
6. Tom & Julia B. from a ferret free zone present Oliver.
7. Karin Schneider of Berlin Germany presents Mufti and Piefke.
8. Eric & Irene Berglund of Oliver Springs TN present Rocky (ferret) and Sammy.
9. Jennifer Wilson of Eveleth MN presents Critter (raccoon) and Tia (ferret).

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"FERRETS UNMASKED is an honest video about the domestic ferret. It's detailed, informative, fun to watch, and will answer any questions you may have about this fun, loving, and inquisitive animal. We highly recommend this video to anyone who is considering a ferret as a pet, or if you already own one and need to know more about ferrets, this is the best information on the market today!"

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"I found the tape FERRETS UNMASKED surprisingly complete, accurate, and entertaining. Professionally produced, all aspects of ferret care; training, nutrition, and breeding, are discussed. The tape is a delight and a must for ferret owners. My clinic is honored to show the video daily in the reception room to ferret clients and I sell the tape daily."

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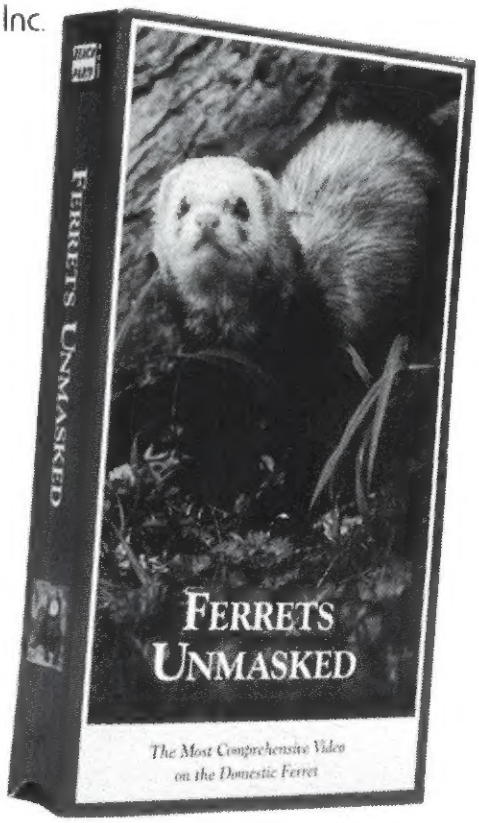
"A wonderful celebration of ferrets in this video for new and experienced ferret lovers. It captures the spirit of ferrets everywhere. Chock full of information that will help you to be the best ferret owner you can be. In addition to tips for the layperson, FERRETS UNMASKED contains important contributions from some of the foremost names in the ferret community.

Modern Ferret Magazine



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A Practical Guide To Deborah Jeans

Part 2

When talking with Deborah Jeans, author of *A Practical Guide To Ferret Care*, one perceives that she cares deeply for ferrets and is dedicated to educating ferret owners about how to care for their very special pets. In this conclusion of the *Modern Ferret* interview with Deborah [see Issue #2 for part 1 of this interview], she talks about upcoming projects, Ferrets Inc., and the story behind the little guy we're seeing nearly everywhere, Tommy the spokesferret.

Modern Ferret Magazine (MFM): What avenues are Ferrets Inc. pursuing with regard to ferrets and ferret products?

Deborah: I already have designed a complete line of ferret products. We were hoping to be going into production now, but unfortunately with the death of my two pets everything got put on hold a couple of months. I'm hoping that possibly by June we can start that work. I will be taking on a partner for that venture. I'm not doing that myself. You've got to draw the line somewhere because I do need some rest. But I tell you, I don't consider it work, because I really enjoy what I'm doing. I am exhausted sometimes by 10:00 at night, but I get up every day at 5:00.

MFM: What kind of items are you producing?

Deborah: Well, we're going to be doing everything, of course, high quality. The highest quality, durable materials, bright colors. Tommy and Twinkle — you haven't met Twinkle yet, she's in the new book. Tommy has a companion now and they will be the focal points. We feel that Disney has Mickey and Minnie, and we're going to have Tommy and Twinkle. We're going to get them out there and we're going to promote the ferret. We're going to make everything absolutely drop-dead gorgeous. We're designing cages and special bowls and special types of tents. They've been tested and tested and tested. All our products will have money-back guarantees. Some of the products that we're making, I have personally used the same item for four years now. The only reason I ended up giving it away is because I'm sick of looking at it. So, hopefully, that's how long all of our products will last. We will not be getting into food at this time, I'm not interested in food. There are some wonderful foods coming out on the market. I'm not a nutritionist and I don't know enough about food. But I know a lot about materials. It's going to be the Tommy and Twinkle Collection. It's going to be designer ferrets, everything designer. We'll be bringing the model from me into what we're doing. Twinkle will be the model for this whole thing.

Deborah Jeans and her ferret, Newfy, who's quite a character.

We want everything to be easy for the consumer. Because if it takes the consumer a couple of minutes to change the ferret's cage, and if the cage is designed specifically with the ferret in mind, and it's easier for the consumer, then the ferret's going to get much better care. It takes me two minutes to clean their cage in the morning. I've designed this cage that they're living in now. It takes me absolutely two minutes in the morning to do their bedding and

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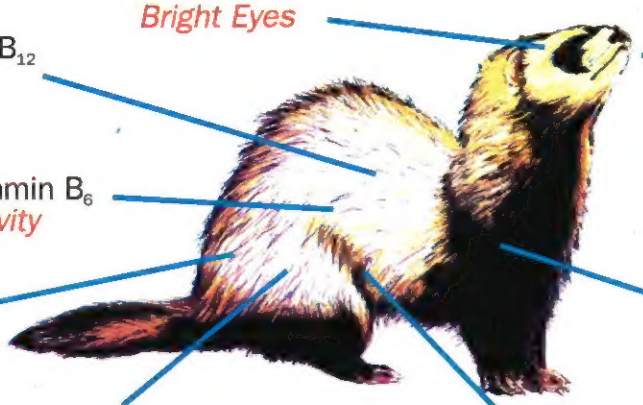

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get them all ready and go. That includes the litter box, food, everything. And that's going to be a lot of money, but we're going to do a full line and we're very happy about it.

MFM: What new books are you working on right now?

Deborah: This new book will be *A Practical Guide To Ferret Care* again, it will be a second edition. It will be also be in full color. We're honored to have Jeanne Carley [creator of "The Ferret Calendar"] as our new staff photographer. She has done the cover, and we're very excited about it. My second book I'm working on for ferrets for release next summer will be for the advanced ferret owner and also for veterinarians. I have five veterinarians writing now. It will be called *A Comprehensive Guide To Ferret Care*, which will be ready and gone to press hopefully by August of next year.. We're also working diligently on that right now. You want to help? We're so busy. You have no idea.

Because I lost, unfortunately, two of my ferrets in January, everything that was in the present tense is now past tense. Everything has changed now. I have something in the book that is so gorgeous. I commissioned an oil painter to do it. I'm just going to tell you that it's a painting of Wheezee and Pepper going into heart clouds. It is so gorgeous. I picked it up yesterday and I cried all the way home. It is just so beautiful and so touching. So that will be going in the book. I've written a chapter on remembering Wheezee and Pepper that will be going in. I'm also photographing their grave. I'm going into detail on Wheezee and Pepper, writing a chapter about them, writing about the euthanasia, and what I went through. I talk about what meaning they've brought to my life. Not only about unconditional love, which is the one thing anybody thinks of right away, but all their aspects and intelligence. I go into great descriptions of the joys they shared with me. They remind you to do again in life what you've given up, that you don't think about anymore.

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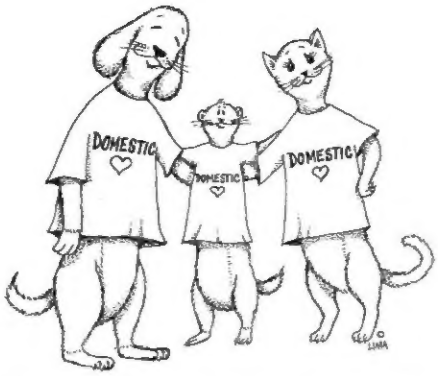


Tommy is busy promoting himself as a domestic household pet along with his companions the cat and dog.

By doing so, what I'm hoping — and if it doesn't work out, quit writing — is to really show that ferrets offer the same type of contribution to our lives that cats and dogs and other companion animals do. That's held up the book for two months.

One thing we're doing which is really kind of cute — with each new book that comes out, we're having a previous cover in the cover photo. With this book, we have a black-eyed white laying out in a denim hammock and it looks like he just finished reading *A Practical Guide To Ferret Care*. It's going to carry everything on. That's one of the things that we're doing and it looks great. Of course, Jeanne Carley shot all the photographs.

And the book is entering into the book market now — book stores. It's been accepted into the Library of Congress. It has its ISBN [International Standard Book Number] and it's fully documented and cataloged centrally throughout the world. We've hired a publishing company that is very well-known to promote the book, so I don't have to do that. I'd rather work on the educational part of it than the business end of anything. But in the beginning you do it all.

MFM: Does that mean you'll be doing book-store tours?

Deborah: If requested. I've been approached by someone who's probably going to become the press agent for the company. Really what I'm interested in doing is talk shows, radio talk shows, and more education, trying to dispel some of the rumors and myths that are out there about ferrets. That's quite a job in itself. I've done a tremendous amount of book signings. Do I like them? No, I don't like book signings. I like meeting everyone, but to sit and sign a book I consider a waste of time. I'd rather be out there educating someone. I've even gone into someone's home down here and showed them how to cut the ferret's nails. I've worked with children. So I'd much prefer to take care of the educational aspects. And book signings? I sign them from the office. I will be doing less and less book signings as time goes by. I've had enough of the spotlight being a model and doing all those things. I mean, it has its moments. Just when I thought I was entering into a private life I'm back out there again.

MFM: I'm sure there are a lot of ferret people out there at ferret shows who'd like to get a chance to meet you.

Deborah: I do enjoy going to the shows. I went to a couple shows last year; I will be going to shows this year. I really like to help out in any way I can. I'm going to New York this year for sure. That's going to be sometime in November [November 11] with Big Apple Ferrets. I'm going to be there for that along with Dr. Brown and some of the other veterinarians who are coming in. I'm looking forward to that. Don't get me wrong about the book signings, but you understand how it goes. There are only so many hours in a day. I have to make my priorities. I enjoy meeting the ferret people and things like that, but I have to start drawing the line. Like I said, sleep is starting to become very important to me.

MFM: What kinds of topics are covered in the upcoming *Comprehensive Guide To Ferret Care*?

Deborah: Well... I don't want to give the names right now of the veterinarians, I want it to be more of a surprise. But we will be covering all the diseases of the ferret, such as heart diseases, different types of cancer, the "green slime" disease. Going further into detail with the nutritional aspects of the ferret. I could go on and on. We're adding 10 new chapters to the book. Of course, as we go, we learn new things and the research is intensifying right now. I'm personally doing it all myself. There's a lot of that going on; a lot of demonstration work being drawn up now for the book. Again, that book will also be updated on a yearly basis as the veterinarians find out new information.

MFM: I'm sure they want to get the information on the research out. On the other side of it, the vets who need this information will get it. *The Comprehensive Guide To Ferret Care* should be very useful for all of them.

Deborah: And for me because I'm still learning. It's amazing how much I've learned just in the last year doing constant research. It just amazes me. I'm looking forward to each year as it goes by. Another thing I'm doing to further the education is that I'm writing a lot of articles for the pet industry. I'm writing an

upcoming article for *Pet Age* magazine on housebreaking a ferret. One of the number-one problems, because it's a myth that they can easily be litter trained. Ferrets are unlike cats; ferrets don't naturally jump into a box and dig. And because of the rapid metabolism, by the time they know that they have to go, they don't have time for running and digging or thinking about it. So that's a very important article. We get many phone calls here at Ferrets Inc. — probably about 15-20 calls a week — and 18 out of those 20 phone calls are about litter training.

MFM: We made a deal with our ferrets; they pick a corner and we say, "OK, that's your corner." What can you do? At least they're consistent.

Deborah: But many ferret owners don't know that ferrets need a litter box in each new room — and sometimes two — and that they have to be retrained in each new environment. And that on occasion, no matter how good they are, they will get excited and go where they are.

I have to tell you one little story. Of all the phone calls that we receive... this woman called up and was alarmed and in a panic. She was having a major problem with her ferret. And I was in a panic with her. I'm saying: "OK, get to the bottom line. What can we do to help you?" She said: "It's a litter problem." I said: "What is it?" She said: "Well, my ferret was always using one side of the litter box and now it's using the other." And I said: "Excuse me? That is not a problem." Of all the panic phone calls we get during the week, she really had us worried. I simply advised her to scoop the other side and clean it. That story kept us laughing for a few days. I told her that that should be her only problem. But we did find out after talking with her a little further that she hadn't scooped in a week.

MFM: What about Ferrets Inc.? What does it do?

Deborah: We're not only a publishing company, we contribute to shelters, we give donations — a percentage of the profits that come in from the sales. We donate books. We're constantly donating books to all the legislators. We're working with California; we worked with Michigan to help legalize ferrets there. We've become a networking organization. People write in with problems they're having with their animals. I go to schools and I do talks with children — so it's more than just a book. Those are a lot of the things that we're doing. I've received about 600 letters over the last year from consumers thanking us for writing the book and for some of our donations and contributions.

MFM: A good amount of people in the general population seem to think that the ferret owner is some kind of pet eccentric. How do you feel about that perception?

Deborah: People often say to me: "You have a ferret?" or: "You're into ferrets?" And I say: "Well, what is that supposed to mean?" They expect me to have no teeth and — I have no idea. Wherever I can help the ferret out, I send my photo. I'm real. I have teeth and I have a job and I'm an intelligent person. They say in my research that the average ferret owner makes a salary of $40,000 and more. They are highly educated. And I must tell you, you need to be intelligent to own this animal. Because if you're not, they own you. I'm working on a new ferret right now that's outsmarting me and is controlling me but we'll see what happens over a period of time. I have a new ferret named Newfy. Growing up in Newfoundland I was called a Newfy and I kind of enjoyed the nickname for many, many years. Nobody really knew my real name so it was either D.J. or Newfy. I'm of English descent and he came over from England this year, this ferret. So he's my namesake. He's a big white albino. When I picked him up he was a whopping 5-1/2 pounds. I've trimmed him down to 4-1/2. I've had him neutered. He's six months old and he's a complete brat. I've had to rearrange the cage, rearrange how I do everything. He's quite a character.

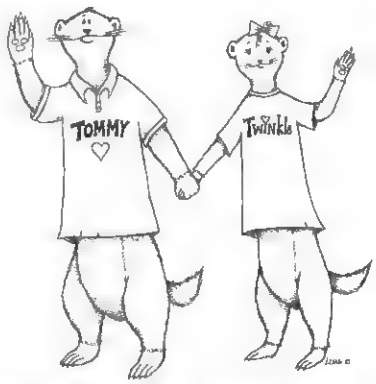
MFM: How did Tommy come about? He seems to have become a spokesferret for you as well as for ferrets in general.

Deborah: Yes, he has. I had a brother named Tom who was one year younger than myself. Tom and I were very, very close. We were like Mutt and Jeff. Tommy went in the armed forces and ended up serving in Cairo, Egypt, where he contracted an incurable disease. He left the army and then, unfortunately, the disease took his life. But it took four years; he was terminally ill for four years. We were very close. Tommy's been gone 11 years and that was a void in my life for a very long time. He was not only a brother, but it became a mothering-type thing to me because I so wanted him to get well. We spent a lot of time, traveling into different hospitals. He lost his eyesight in the last two years, so I learned about the blind. We traveled to Helen Keller and did things like getting canes. I had dealt with doctors a lot, and we were in and out of so many hospitals trying to find out what he had. By the time we did it was really too late. So he was quite sick for four years. He died leaving behind two little children and a broken-hearted sister and another sister and two other brothers. It was really tough on me for a long time. I mourned his loss for many years. But when my brother was alive, he was

Twinkle keeps Tommy in shape for all his travelling. They are helping ferret legalization efforts all across the country by donating books.

so spirited and he was such a fighter and he had such courage. I don't think I would have had the same. I don't know what kept him going. He always looked for the bright side of life. And, I don't know, I guess being with the ferrets, having Wheezee for a little while, I also realized that these little critters have a fighting spirit and everyday they look to play and look for adventure. I somehow saw that in my brother and I saw a parallel there. I also always wanted to put my brother's name on my child — little did I know it was going to end up on a ferret. It's kind of funny because my brother was Tom Jeans and my father was Tom Jeans, my father died last year, and his grandfather, great-grandfather was Tom Jeans — the name has been passed down. I always wanted to joke with my relatives, saying little do they know that Tommy Jeans is going to come down on a ferret — take it from here. I wanted to carry on my brother's name and I'm very happy that I did it this way. So that's how Tommy ferret came about. And he's growing. Now he's in full color. He is gorgeous.

You can contact Ferrets Inc. at PO Box 450099 Miami FL 33245-0099.
You can contact The Ferret Calendar at PO Box 7161 Redwood City CA 94063.



Tommy and Twinkle look forward to seeing you in the new book!

GIMME SHELTER...

S.T.A.R.* Ferrets

*Shelters That Adopt & Rescue

Pam Grant's Grand Adventure

You wouldn't know from looking that Pam and John Grant's house is a ferret shelter. That is, it's not exactly what you expect. But, it isn't what you don't expect. The ferrets are scattered in various rooms throughout the house. Upstairs, for example, are the geriatric and nursery wards. Oh, and there is a room for humans, too. There's also a ferret art gallery of sorts in the living room, where Pam has an extensive collection of ferret art from plates to figurines to paintings and drawings.

The shelter area is in the lower level of the house. There's the Ferrets of Pet Pals shelter room and the room where Pam and John's own 24 ferrets live. Ferrets are everywhere. Cats are everywhere. Every once in a while a bunny hops by. A bunny? The bunny, Pam says, is not afraid of the ferrets, though considering the enthusiasm with which ferrets play, it might want to reconsider. Pam says, "It has met a ferret before. It has been upstairs when one of the old-timers was out. Of course, an eight-year-old ferret is not going to go after rabbits." Amazingly, the bunny also gets along with the eight cats. The entire house is arranged for the comfort and safety of the animals, with futons instead of fold-out couches and the recliner stuck in a corner where it doesn't get used.

Pam and John Grant with their ferret log — over 1000 ferrets!

DISCOVERING ANIMALS

Having animals around the house is nothing new to Pam; her family always had a cat when she was growing up. Over her mother's protests about having a rodent in the house, Pam asked for a gerbil as a reward for getting good grades. There were gerbils in Pam's classroom at school and she really wanted one of her own. Her parents relented and bought her a gerbil. She even put in her own money to get a second gerbil: "I put that extra dollar and a quarter down to get that companion, because I knew they needed buddies," Pam comments.

Pam's family also adopted a mouse that had turned up in their garage after it had escaped from the snake up the street. To add to the menagerie, Pam brought home a guinea pig from school. In Girl Scouts, Pam's interest in animals was evident as she went into the woods to identify plants, trees, flowers, and bird calls. "I've always liked animals," she explains. Pam's mother also enjoyed watching birds and wildlife.

Despite her familiarity with animals, when her husband John brought home a ferret in 1985, Pam's first reaction was the typical: What is a ferret? She couldn't figure out the attraction: "You have to live with a ferret, honest and truly," she says. "I offer public officials in my area to visit for two hours with me. That's all I ask. Then you can make your own decision. But you have to experience a ferret." Ultimately, both Pam and John were captivated by the ferret.

The story of the ferret that John brought home goes like this: John saw a notice about a ferret that needed a new home. If it didn't find a new home, it would be destroyed. Even though neither Pam nor John knew anything about ferrets, they couldn't allow the animal to be put down. The ferret's owners were afraid of the ferret and they had kept it outside in a hand-made wood and chicken wire cage. The cage was filled with feces and cockroaches when John went to get it. The owners gave John leather gloves with which to handle the ferret, but John had been involved with wildlife rehabilitation and wasn't afraid of the ferret. Instead, he put the ferret in the back seat of his car and brought him home to Pam.

A year and a half passed before Pam and John got their second ferret. After that, they became known for taking in ferrets. Pam describes the scenario: "We'd walk into a pet store and they'd say, 'Somebody just dropped this off. We don't want it so why don't you take it? We know you like ferrets.'" They also acquired a few ferrets from Animal Control, whose policy at the time was to destroy the ferrets. But someone there would pick up a ferret and smuggle it out to Pam and John. When they reached eight ferrets, Pam said: "We can't keep just taking everybody's ferrets."

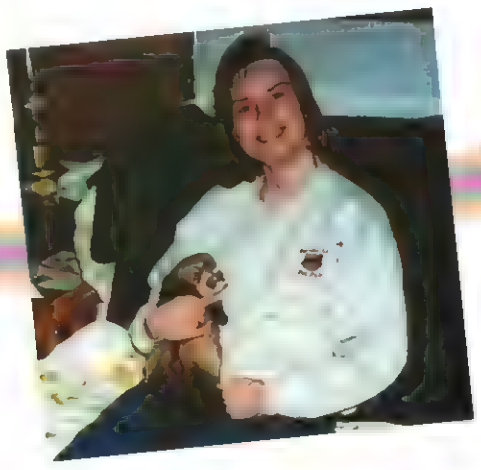
Ferrets are Pet Pals

THE FERRETS OF PET PALS

Pam and John started working with a woman who ran a local shelter. They helped her place ferrets. Eventually, however, the woman decided to pursue other interests and had to get rid of all the ferrets she had. Pam and John took over the operation. That was the beginning of Pet Pals. "We learned everything the hard way," Pam notes. But now, after 10 years of talking with breeders and veterinarians and learning as much as she can about ferrets, Pam's ferret knowledge is quite remarkable. This is particularly true when one considers that she has no formal education in the sciences or animals. In fact, Pam's bachelor's degree is in studio art and her master's is in cartography.

Logging In

One of Pam's major undertakings related to Pet Pals is to keep meticulous records of the ferrets that pass through the shelter. Pulling out the Pet Pals log, Pam explains that it has been rewritten twice already. She has tried to keep track of all the ferrets in the log, writing down anything she could find out about the ferret's background. But this method of record-keeping became cumbersome—not to mention messy. Pam points out how difficult the log became to read: "you spill something on it or the ferret comes back and you white it out. Then you have to



write somebody's name over it. Then I started color coding because all these ferrets went out in a certain year." In 1988, the first year of operation, Pet Pals took in 45 ferrets and adopted out 38. In the end of 1992, a total of 177 ferrets came into Pet Pals and 166 were adopted out. In 1993, Pam started using the computer, and, John teases, "everything went downhill from there."

Pam puts all the pertinent information about the ferret into the log. She says, "we feel that it's important to have not only their ages but to keep records of when they have their shots." At the time of this interview, a total of 1,060 ferrets had been through Pet Pals, according to the log. Pam includes all of her own ferrets and their litters in the log along with the shelter ferrets. In the last year, Pam started noting, for statistical purposes, the origins of the ferrets that came to Pet Pals. She has various codes for the various places the ferrets might be from such as Path Valley, Marshall Farms, or Mount Vernon Ferrets.

What's in the Packet?

The Pet Pals adoption packet includes: information about the specific ferret; a listing of clubs, contacts, and recommended veterinarians in the new owner's area; a two-page pamphlet on how to take care of the ferret; and the adoption contract. Pet Pals and the new owner each get a portion of the adoption contract. The new owner's name, address, and other information is then entered into the computer. To help put the new owner in touch with ferret clubs in his or her area, Pam lets the clubs know that the person adopted a ferret. This way, the new owners is introduced to the valuable resources of the club, and the club might get a new member.

The adoption contract is a very important aspect of the adoption procedure; it spells out the rights and responsibilities of both the new owner and the shelter. When a youth adopts a ferret from Pet Pals, the youth and the parents have to sign the contract. Having the parents sign ensures the legality of the contract and having the youth sign helps him or her realize the importance of the adoption and the contract, as well as the responsibility of taking care of the animal. Pam asks the new owners to take the ferret to the vet once a year for vaccinations and tells them which vaccinations are required. The contract also contains a clause that states that the shelter is not responsible for the animal's actions. That is, the shelter adopts out the animal in good faith, but it cannot be held liable for what the ferret might do. The contract also includes a reminder that the adoption of the ferret is acceptance of and agreement with the conditions in the contract.

For her records and statistical purposes, Pam notes the name, color, and sex of the ferret; the ferret's roster number; and the adoption fee charged. Pam says: "I found that it was important to put down the adoption fee there, because most of the time you charge a standard adoption fee, but every once in a while something will preclude it. Or I'll adopt out a ferret and in the 30 days that it's been out it goes from under a year to over a year." Age is significant since Pam's adoption fee changes based upon the age of the ferret. There are also those few times that Pam will have what she calls a "soft case," where she takes $10 or $15 off the adoption fee. "But when they come back to return it, you don't want to refund them what normally would be a full adoption fee," she explains.

When a ferret is picked up by Fairfax Animal Control, it is neither destroyed nor adopted out; instead, Animal Control turns the ferret over to an area club member. In 1993, Pet Pals received 25 ferrets from Animal Control, which may not seem like a lot of ferrets, but Pam is quick to point out that they are 25 ferrets that were not destroyed. An agreement between Fairfax County Animal Control and Pet Pals states that Pet Pals cannot "sell" the ferrets; however, the shelter can charge to reimburse itself for any related expenses. This can lead to burdensome record-keeping, as Pam points out: "I'm not going to keep track of which ferret costs me what. All the animals are spayed and neutered and brought up to date on distemper shots before they leave the shelter. If I figured out what it costs to keep the animal here... ." So Pet Pals charges a flat fee based upon the age of the ferret. Pam feels that it works itself out in the long run.

Do You Take This Ferret?

Pam says that she meets many interesting people because of Pet Pals: "It's just amazing the different types of lifestyles. I do not look at a person's outfit or the color of their hair or where they happen to wear earrings, because I want to see what's deep down inside." The only people Pam will not adopt to are those who live in the District of Columbia, because of the anti-ferret legislation there.

Like many ferret shelters and organizations, Pet Pals discourages ferret adoption by families with children under three years old. Pam makes exceptions to this rule if the family already has a ferret and if, in the particular situation, the adoption seems appropriate. She makes decisions on a case-by-case basis. The whole family shows up so Pam can determine how comfortable the child is with ferrets. However, if the ferret was turned over by Fairfax County, Pet Pals is prohibited from adopting out to a family with a child under the age of three. It is not often an issue, though, since Pam does not get many ferrets from the county. Other situations for which adoption may not be appropriate include homes with terriers or hounds and homes with free-flying birds. A caged bird might not pose a problem, but a bird on a perch that the ferret could get to is not recommended. Pam cautions that the ferret should not be allowed to play with pet rabbits, guinea pigs, or other rodents or with hedgehogs. But cats and most breeds of dogs are usually all right.

As for reptiles and amphibians, although Pam isn't extremely familiar with these, she would not recommend a ferret playing with a fast-moving lizard or a frog or toad. She says care should be taken regarding snakes—for the snake's sake in some cases and for the ferret's sake in others. She stresses that all family members be educated about ferrets and which other family pets the ferret should or should not be allowed to play with. Pam has had ferrets turned in to the shelter because they accidentally killed a child's pet hamster. In some of these cases, the parent doesn't explain to the child why the ferret shouldn't play with the hamster. Pam says, "so now the ferret has to go to the shelter because of their mistake. It's a shame."

A S.T.A.R. IS BORN

Shelters That Adopt and Rescue Ferrets, or S.T.A.R. Ferrets, was started in 1991. "I was inventing everything from scratch," Pam recalls. She had been working with Mary Van Dahm of the Ferret Adoption, Information and Rescue (F.A.I.R.) Society/Shelter, who had been doing rescue work. The two had met long ago and they had talked extensively on the phone. Pam describes what happened: "One day, it occurred to me after about the umpteenth phone call from somebody else who wanted to know what it took to start a shelter: Why don't I just tell them I'm starting an organization, have them mail me 10 bucks, and I'll mail them

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everything?" Pam calculated the $10.00 membership fee based on the cost of the long-distance phone calls and concluded that it would cost about the same to photocopy and mail the information—and she would spend less time on the phone. She decided to start S.T.A.R. Ferrets. Pam asked Mary to be co-director of the organization since she was well-respected in the ferret community and has extensive knowledge about ferrets. Mary agreed. Pam would produce a newsletter for which Mary would write some articles. And, since Mary was the one with the copy machine, she would photocopy the newsletter. Besides the newsletter, S.T.A.R. Ferrets compiles and continually updates a database of ferret shelters, clubs, contacts, organizations, veterinarians, publishers, manufacturers, and other ferret-related entities.

Pam adapted the S.T.A.R. Ferrets adoption contracts from the ones she had already created for the Pet Pals shelter. She adapted forms from clubs and other shelters, as well. Now, many shelters use the S.T.A.R. Ferrets information and forms or similar forms. Pam says, "That's what S.T.A.R. is about: to give you the packet so you don't have to keep reinventing the wheel."

Many shelters agree on what should be covered in the adoption contract. For example, there should be a statement to the effect that the new owner will take care of the ferret, and that the ferret will be respected as a pet and a member of the family. The contract should also state that the new owner will keep the ferret in a cage or a ferret-proofed room and that the ferret will be fed a good quality food. Some contracts require that the new owner make sure that the ferret is safe and secure when no one is home.

Shelters customarily offer a grace period to new ferret owners in case the adoption doesn't work out. The shelter will refund the adoption fee during this grace period, which is often seven days. For ferrets adopted from Pet Pals, Pam offers a full refund of the fee up to 30 days after the adoption; this 30-day grace period is one of the longest offered by a ferret shelter. She feels that two weeks should be the minimum grace period because seven days is too short. Hand in hand with the grace period is the contract provision that ferrets adopted out of the shelter cannot be sold or given away. The owner must return the ferret to the shelter. Pam explains that Pet Pals has experienced situations where the animal was given away by the new owner. Unfortunately, the shelter doesn't have the money to bring these matters to small claims court. However, Pam has been able to keep people from giving away or selling the ferret by reminding them that they signed a contract and are obligated to fulfill that contract.

Have You Got What It Takes?

For those who are thinking about starting a shelter, Pam is happy to outline some of the things that need to be considered. That is, after all, a large part of what S.T.A.R. Ferrets does: It gives people the candid information they need to make an informed decision about starting and running a shelter.

First, there's the matter of money. During the first two years of operation, Pet Pals lost $600.00 in out-of-pocket expenses. Pam and John scrounged for any supplies they could. If a ferret came into the shelter with a cage that they could use or sell, they used it or sold it. Most of the Safeguard cages Pam and John have came from a breeder who was going out of business. They went in with another breeder and bought all the ferrets and cages. The breeder took first choice of the ferrets and some cages and left Pet Pals with everything else. "So that was really just one of those golden opportunities that really built the shelter," Pam says. But not all shelters are lucky enough to encounter this type of opportunity. Pam knows of shelters that started with just one cage. However, having the funds to get a few cages and other supplies when starting up a shelter is a good idea.

In the third year of operation, Pet Pals broke even. To help support the shelter, Pam and John would take vendor space at shows. Now, after six years, they have saved up enough money to enable them to take off from the retail part. "We can go to the shows and enjoy the show a little bit more as a spectator," Pam comments.

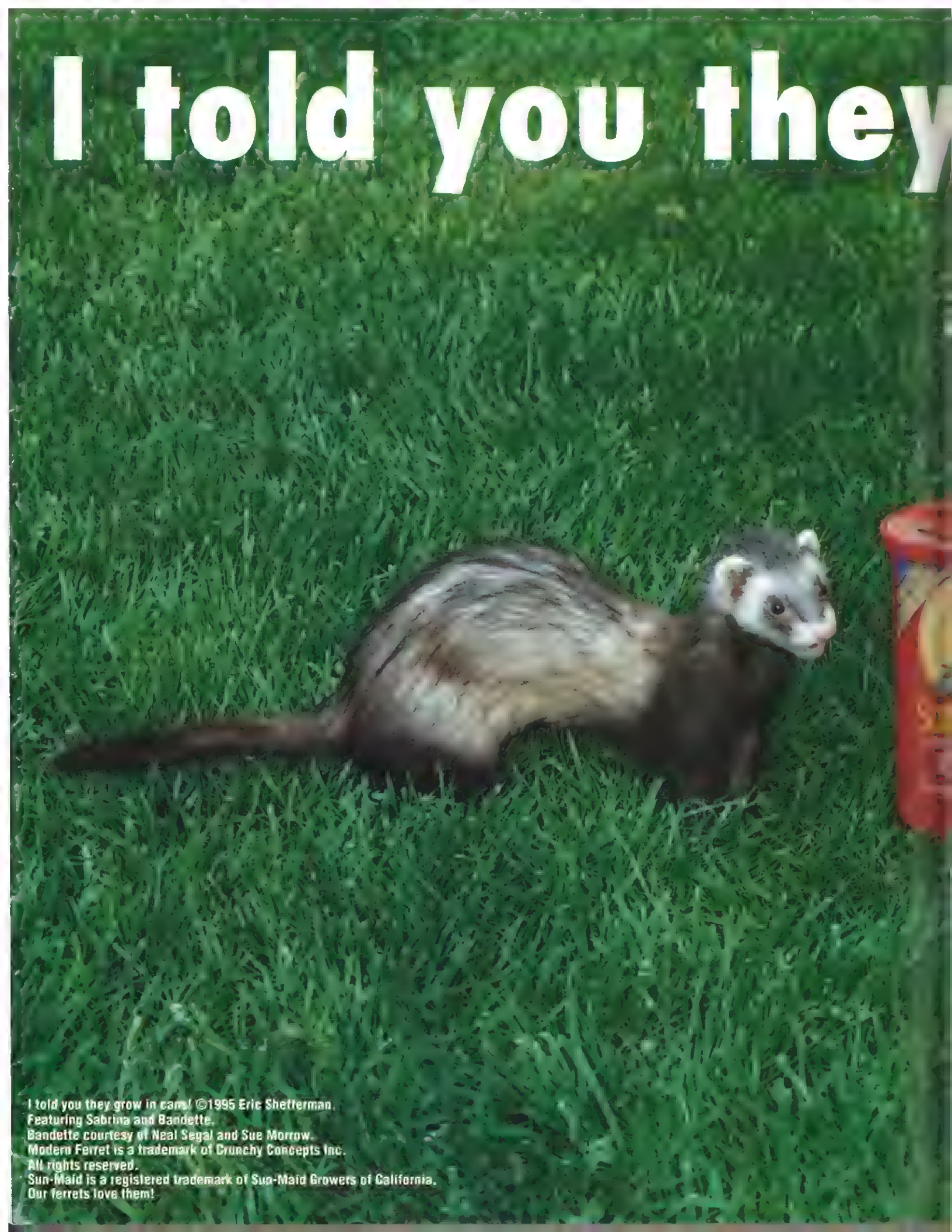
Pam cautions those who want to start a shelter that they need to know their limitations. It is something that she says is hard to explain to people. Sometimes the motivation to start a shelter is a desire to "collect" ferrets, which, Pam stresses, is not what sheltering is about. Part of knowing one's limitations includes being able to realize that the shelter is filled to capacity. One needs to be able to refer the person to another shelter or to move some ferrets to another shelter. Pam illustrates her point: "I'm taking in three tomorrow from Jodi Schroth [of the Susquehanna Valley Ferret Club in Harrisburg, PA] because she's got a breeder going out of business now up in Pennsylvania. She can't handle them all. And basically it's a financial obligation: They're all whole animals. She can't handle all of them being fixed at the same time, so I'm taking a few off her hands. I don't know what I'm getting. We'll know tomorrow. But that's part of the networking that S.T.A.R. does."

Then there's time. The first question one needs to ask oneself, Pam says, is: Do you have the time? Both Pam and John work full-time for the federal government. Every evening, they come home, check all the animals, and let them out for some play time. Their weekends are almost completely devoted to ferrets. As Pam puts it, "I mean, we have a social life, but it most basically revolves around our ferrets and our ferret friends." Some of the chain pet stores call on Pam to do educational presentations about ferrets. With all of this, however, there's little time for anything but ferrets. Pam says she eats, breathes, sleeps, and writes ferrets. Her respite? "I enjoy going to work sometimes because it gets me away from the house." Vacations are also sacrificed for the shelter. "It takes six people to watch this place," John comments. Pam adds that it's quite an effort to line up people who will properly care for the animals.

Of course, it is not enough to set up a shelter—people have to know the shelter exists. For advertising, Pam has found that business cards work best. She gives out her business cards to pet shops, ferret owners, and veterinarians, and they all refer people to Pet Pals. Newspaper ads tend to attract the wrong kind of people and can be very expensive. "Business cards. People will find you," she says.

Other things to consider include having the proper space in which to operate a shelter. Pam says, "You can't be doing this in an apartment that doesn't allow pets." A shelter operator also has to have someone ("...like an understanding spouse," Pam remarks) who is willing to take care of the ferrets when he or she is sick. "We had the flu go through here three years ago. I was medicating all the ferrets. I never want to do that again. I'm very careful every time I pick up something," she says.

Some people involve their children in the operation of the shelter. This is a decision one needs to make at the outset. Pam explains that many children start the venture with



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enthusiasm, but lose interest after a while. According to Pam, a shelter should not be viewed solely as a family animal care-taking activity. But children are not the only ones who can lose interest in the shelter; Pam cautions that burn-out can and does occur. This is something she accepts, though she feels that her passion for learning all she can about ferrets has helped her to remain fresh. Pam comments that many people, including her vets, are surprised that she hasn't burned out yet; she seems a little surprised herself.

Before starting a shelter, one needs to look at the area in which one lives. Many areas need a ferret club more than they need a shelter. Pam believes that clubs are more important than shelters, particularly in areas where there's a lack of information. In lieu of a shelter, club members can act as foster homes for ferrets that need new homes. Clubs, unlike shelters, are social groups and exist to disseminate information and to answer questions. Of course, most shelters will answer questions when necessary, but that is not their function. Independent shelters have often sprung up from club half-way houses. The caution here is that an area can end up having too many shelters. Pam suggests shelters be situated about an hour apart. Pet Pals is approximately an hour away from the other shelters in the region, but it is a large shelter in terms of volume and capacity. Pam explains: "I've got a shed at the side of the house just stuffed full of cages. We've had as many as 96 ferrets in this house at one time. I don't ever want to do that again either, but it did happen one summer."

A person's lifestyle can influence the decision to start a shelter. Those who entertain often, and might have guests who do not appreciate animals, might not want to run a shelter. Along with animals comes the inevitable animal odor. Pam says, "I work very hard to make sure that this doesn't come off as the Bronx Zoo or anything." A full-draw fan pulls all the air out into the shed at the side of the house. "We also have a very high air-conditioning and heating bill because of the fan in the back room." The shed, Pam adds, can be used as another ferret room if necessary because it's already heated and air conditioned. The full-draw fan is not the only device the Grants use to control the animal smell, they also have a fan that works in conjunction with a deodorant. Keeping the house as clean as possible also serves as "insurance" if an Animal Control officer wants to check on how the shelter is being run.

★ Discretion Is the Better Part of...

In an issue of the S.T.A.R. Ferrets newsletter, Pam published a 15-question test regarding how shelters keep their facilities. The first question was: "How much notice would you need before you'd let Animal Control into your house? - 24 hours? A week? A month? Never?" Pam notes that some shelters are not kept as clean as they ought to be. She says she has to be diplomatic whenever she encounters these situations: "You have to ask them questions such as: 'Are you trying to sell some of these? Are you trying to place some of these? Can I assist you in any way?' You have to try to work with them." Reporting these shelters to Animal Control is not often in the best interest of the ferrets, Pam explains, because they will have to go to another shelter, which could lead to further problems. "You have to have some good social skills if you're going to be dealing with shelter aspects," she points out.

Those social skills also come in handy when the phone rings constantly, interrupting almost every activity. Pam and John have given up watching television in favor of rental movies because they can use the pause button. "You have to answer the same questions over and over again," Pam says, which can try anyone's patience. John adds that they've had to tactfully turn people away because the people were not suited to taking care of a ferret. Pam explains that a shelter operator has to be able to tell people that a ferret isn't right for them. She says: "There are times that I've thought 'well, it might work, it might not.' You give them the benefit of the doubt. There are times that I've kicked myself in the butt because I really shouldn't have let that ferret go out the door." Sometimes Pam will tell someone she has no ferrets for adoption because she has "a feeling" about them. "You have to be polite with people for the animal's sake," she says and adds that she can't stop people from getting a ferret from a pet store. Sometimes people who buy a ferret at a pet store simply don't understand the animal and they show up to ask Pam questions. "If I don't have to take a ferret in, I will talk somebody out of it. I've talked a lot of new ferret owners out of giving up their brand new ferret," Pam says. The questions might take up her entire evening, but at least she knows that the ferret won't end up at the shelter. "And that's the point," she says. The thing Pam best likes to tell people is: "I'd like nothing better than to put myself out of business." After all, that is the point of the shelter/adoption process.

Pam Grant and S.T.A.R. can be contacted at:
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Springfield, VA 22151-0714
Internet addresses:
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73613.231@compuserve.com

CAN A CLEAN HOUSE HARM YOUR PET?
by Nina Anderson and Howard Peiper

Many of us have an obsession with keeping our living space clean. Our cupboards are filled with floor cleaners, wall cleaners, air fresheners, carpet cleaners and deodorizers, tile cleaners, waxes, abrasives, spot removers, bleaches, stain resistant sprays, soaps, and drain cleaners. None of the product manufacturers recommend ingesting them through the mouth or eyes. Warnings on many labels instruct us to use them only in a well-ventilated place. Does this mean you shouldn't breathe them either? You may not be able to determine how toxic a substance is because normally ingredients are not listed or, if they are, we have no idea what all those big words mean. People clean and clean, and polish and polish, and go to work knowing their house shines, but have they left their pets inside to get poisoned?

Aerosols are known to cause respiratory stress and asthma in people. Why wouldn't they also affect pets with the same affliction? Also dangerous to pets are nonstick cooking pans and office and artist products. Glues, whiteout, toners, pens, paint, solvents, crayons, clay, etc. can all cause illness if eaten or licked by your pet. Parents are careful to teach children not to put anything other than food in their mouths. Unfortunately, animals rarely learn that lesson and therefore get sick from "harmless" materials not put out of their reach.

Just like pesticides, the chemicals in many household cleaners can cause genetic damage in our pets. Most animal studies have determined that cancer is evident with toxic levels of chemical ingestion. Fumes left over from cleaning applications can linger in the home for long periods of time, especially when the windows are closed during the heating or air conditioning season. Also dangerous are those nice smelling air fresheners we all are fanatical about buying. Laden with chemicals, they are not to be eaten, therefore why breathe them? Pets have no choice.

More natural approaches to cleaning can reduce risks to pets. Vinegar works well instead of ammonia. Borax, lemon juice, dried kelp, coconut-oil derivatives, baking soda, and salt can be used in combinations as they are found in natural cleaning products. Non-chlorine bleaches are preferred. A combination of white vinegar, lemon juice, and olive oil can act as furniture polish. Vinegar can be used as a fabric softener, and for silver polish you can use salt water and baking soda in an aluminum pot. Cornstarch is a great carpet freshener. Lemon grass or cinnamon sticks can be used as natural air fresheners or use citrus/vegetable extract evaporators. Alternatives to mothballs are cedar shavings, lemon grass, lavender, and rosemary. (Putting clothes in the dryer of freezer will cook or freeze the larvae.) Zeolites, crushed porous rocks, are safe deodorizers for litter boxes, pet houses, and runs. They also eliminate urine odor from carpets.

Our lifestyles do have far-reaching effects and what we put down our sink or release into the air could harm our animal friends. Be responsible and consider all implications of your actions when you go shopping for household products.

Nina Anderson and Howard Peiper are authors of *Are You Poisoning Your Pets?*, which describes household hazards to your pet, gives solutions and describes methods that can bolster the immune system of your animal family member. Available at bookstores or call (800) 903-3837.

The Aging Ferret

The Doctor Is In™ - Installment #3

By David Kupersmith, D.V.M.

As I sit at my computer writing this column, I am amazed to realize it is almost summertime. This, therefore, seems like the perfect time to remind you that ferrets are very susceptible to heat stroke. DON'T LEAVE THEM IN A CAR!

In previous columns we have gotten your pet off on the right footing by discussing the vaccine protocol for the young ferret and dietary recommendations. With this issue, we will progress to the older ferret.

After finishing the series of vaccinations that are given from 8 to 16 weeks of age, most ferrets are set for a year. The majority of ferrets sold in the United States are spayed or castrated before ever getting to the pet shop. If your pet is from a private breeder, neutering is recommended at 5 to 6 months of age. For the first three years of life a routine annual examination consists of vaccinations (canine distemper vaccination — Fervac-D [United Vaccines, Inc.; Madison, WI] and rabies vaccination — ImRab-3 [Rhone-Merieux; Athens, GA]), a fecal examination, and, most important, a complete physical examination.

The average life span for a ferret is between 7 and 10 years. If we divide that in half, we can see that the examination procedures for a "middle-aged ferret" should begin at approximately three years.

Starting at three years of age, I strongly recommend the addition of a blood profile to the yearly examination. The collection of blood is very easily accomplished during the examination. To reduce stress on the ferret, I often use an extremely short-acting gas anesthesia (Isoflurane). [See Issue #2 for blood collection procedures. — Ed.] To increase the diagnostic value of a blood profile, the ferret should not be fed for between 3 and 4 hours prior to the examination; water is permitted.

By withholding food, the blood profile may pick up an early case of insulinoma. This is a functional tumor of the pancreatic beta cells that results in an overproduction of insulin; it is essentially the opposite of Diabetes Mellitus. In the past, I looked at the insulin levels, but I find a fasting blood glucose to be a more useful test. If your ferret shows a blood glucose level of 60 mg/dl or lower, your vet should suspect a tumor. This tumor is one of the most common neoplasias seen in middle-aged and older ferrets.

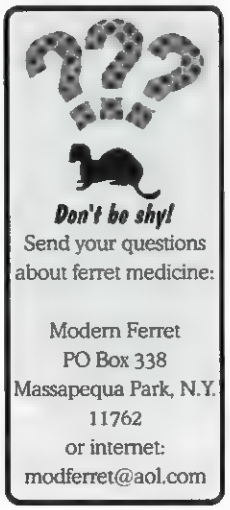
Another fairly common complaint of the middle-aged ferret is hyperadrenocorticism (adrenal disease). This problem is rarely picked up on routine blood work, as there is no specific change which is associated with excessive production of estrogen by the hyperactive adrenal. Most cases are diagnosed as a result of fairly characteristic clinical signs, including hair loss and the presence of a swollen vulva in a spayed female ferret. For borderline cases, a new hormone screen is available, but is somewhat cost-prohibitive. In the majority of cases, clinical interpretation will preclude the need for this test. Like insulinoma, however, hyperadrenocorticism is a treatable condition if caught early.

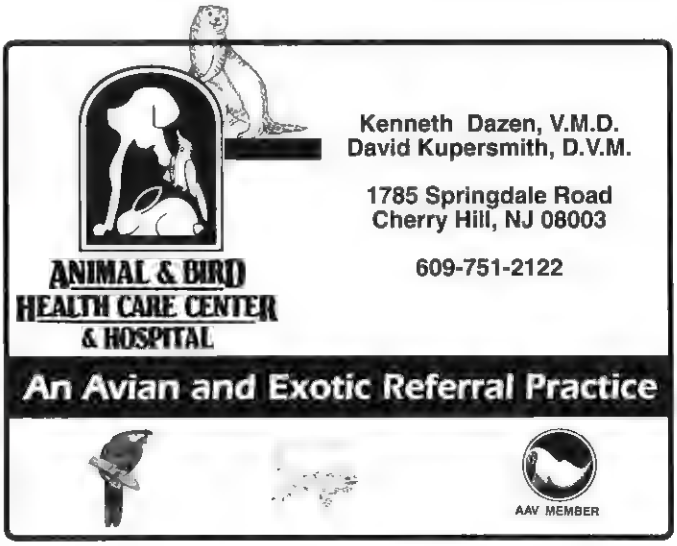
As if these two neoplasias weren't enough, lymphosarcoma (tumors of the lymph nodes) is another common problem. The initial presenting sign is usually enlarged lymph nodes, and a review of the hemogram may show an increase in the number of circulating lymph cells. [Symptoms and treatment of lymphosarcoma are discussed in detail for veterinarians in this issue's *Doctor to Doctor* section. — Ed.]

All three of these conditions are treatable if detected early. This early detection is possible if you regularly bring your ferret to a veterinarian who is familiar with ferrets. The addition of a blood profile after three years of age allows a more complete review of the animal's health. As your pet continues to age, your vet may also recommend radiographs to help detect signs of cardiomyopathy (heart disease). The more your vet looks for, the better the chance of detecting a problem early, and the better the chance your ferret will live longer. I will discuss signs and treatments of these conditions in future issues.

Wishing both you and your ferret a long healthy life, I look forward to answering your questions in future columns.

David Kupersmith, D.V.M., practices at the Animal & Bird Health Care Center & Hospital in Cherry Hill, NJ. Send questions and/or comments to Dr. Kupersmith c/o Modern Ferret at PO Box 338, Massapequa Park, NY 11762 or via e-mail at modferret@aol.com.





Ralph's Reviews IN COLOR

featuring: RALPH THE INSPECTOR

WarmFuzzy Ferret Harness® by WarmFuzzy Ferret Rescue
RD 2 Box 2118
Maidencreek Road
Fleetwood PA 19522
Phone: (610) 926-9087
Contact: Shirley Hertzog (retailer inquiries welcome!)

The WarmFuzzy Ferret Harness® is designed especially for ferrets. The Velcro closures make for a custom fit on every ferret. The Velcro also makes it easy to put on even the most difficult ferrets, while also being secure enough to prevent escape. The WarmFuzzy Ferret Harness® design places the ferret's weight under the front legs instead of the neck, so you can pick up the ferret by the harness in a hurry — without harming the ferret. It is available in female (1-2 lb), male (2-4 lb), and hob (4 lb & over) sizes, in a wide variety of colors. Matching leashes are also available.

Ralph's Reviews:
This is a very jazzy little number — and it has a matching leash! I was really surprised how comfortable this straight-jacket... I mean, harness was. After just a few minutes, I hardly knew I was wearing it. Except when my mom hoisted me up in the air! Sheesh! You'd think they'd let a ferret explore under the foundation of a building once in a while!

Hammocktent by Kit's Originals
94 Jeffery Lane
Oceanside NY 11572
Phone: (516) 536-6615
Contact: David Guthartz (retailer inquiries welcome!)

It's a hammock. It's a tent. It's a Hammocktent! The top serves as a traditional hammock. The inside area is not only a hammock but also a darkened den. The ample opening allows the ferret (and owner) easy access to the inside. Both the top and inside have acrylic fur for the ferret's comfort. The Hammocktent is available in various colors and comes in small, medium, and large sizes. Ferrets like the coziness and shade of the inside. Designed by ferret owner, David Guthartz, the Kit's Originals Hammocktent was created for a ferret's particular needs and tastes.

Ralph's Reviews:
I like this item. I can snooze inside where it's dark, and have all my pals pile on top of me. The fake fur is soft and comfy (but not as soft and comfy as MY fur!). Just thinking about it make me want to curl up and take a nap (y-a-w-n).

Have your favorite ferret products retailer give these folks a call!

Clara Rodriguez, who currently lives in N.J., is an artist who has always found herself very deeply connected with nature. She has done work in a variety of media including acrylics, gouache, watercolor, and colored pencils. Her subjects are mainly ferrets and other pets, wildlife, and children. Her latest project, which is not yet finished, is a painting of another relative of the domestic ferret. For more information contact:

Black Footed Ferrets
Painting by Clara
(201) 863-6229

Letters to *Modern Ferret*

Subj: 2nd Issue & Contest
X-From: (David Whiteman)
To: Modferret@aol.com (*Modern Ferret*)

Hello,

My wife and I just received our second issue of *Modern Ferret*, and it is great! Love the pictures, love the articles, even love the advertising. It's great to find one source for all our fuzzy loving needs! Keep up the great work.

As for the contest, the sock is on page #8 and the keys are on page #22.
Take care.

David & Jenny
Baby (Aw Mom don't kiss me, I'm too big for that!)
Buttercup (Please, just another ten minutes of kissing.)
Daisy Belle (I'm too beautiful not to kiss!)

I love this magazine! Anyone with a ferret friend should avail themselves of all the information (especially "Doctor to Doctor") in *Modern Ferret*! Keep up the great work!

Judith Groben and friend, Cai
Gwynedd Valley, PA

Dear *Modern Ferret*,

I really enjoy your magazine but I have a few suggestions to make. I think it would be really neat to get stories from ferret owners about their ferrets. I also think that it would be neat to have a question and answer column for "The Doctor Is In." Thank you!

Kara Camp
Hopewell Junction, NY

[We welcome questions for Dr. Kupersmith's "The Doctor Is In" column. Send your questions to Dr. Kupersmith c/o Modern Ferret, PO Box 338, Massapequa Park, NY 11762. As for the stories, see the details for our first story contest on page 25. We expect to see some great ones! — Ed.]

To: ModFerret

I couldn't believe it. A magazine about Ferrets? Surely not, 'cause I'm the only Ferret owner in the world, right? Then it came, right there in the mail...I couldn't believe it! Issue #2 of *Modern Ferret*. Not only is there a great full color magazine all about Ferrets, but these guys actually made (at least) two of 'em! I sat down, clutching this creation in both hands and slowly, quite methodically perused each page. The magazine is sincere, honest and put together with loving care. The photos are wonderful, and the Ferrets... I laughed at every pose! Yes, there are others out there like me who love and adore their Ferrets (maybe even more than me) ...And for someone to make a magazine about 'em, truly a grand achievement which must be recognized! Thus this mail.

Each page brought some new revelation. An ad for a Ferret video? (Where's my checkbook!) From food to toys all right here in one beautiful source! I must say, you guys out-did yourselves. (You must be Ferret owners!) Imzadi (my Ferret — named after the Betazoid word which means 'Beloved' from *Star Trek*) is currently rubbing each page with approval. What a wonderful magazine! (Make lots of money so you can make it Monthly!) I can't wait for the next issue! Keep up the good work on this fine magazine and rush my next issue...

This is Great, right Imzadi? Imzadi! Don't eat the issue!

J. Michael Long

Hello *Modern Ferret*,

I mainly wrote to tell you how much I love your new magazine!! You probably will hear a lot from me, cause I'm sure your magazine will keep me full of questions and opinions!!! You do not know how long I've been waiting for a magazine about ferrets! I especially love the part with "Doctor To Doctor!" I hope it teaches me a lot, for I have 4 wonderful ferrets and I don't plan on stopping there!!!

...

Paws and Claws,
"Saykee's Rolyx"
Cherokee, IA

Dear Mary, Eric and ferrets,

Wow! We are impressed. We love Marshmallow's interview in Pet of the Month. Please put that with your center-ferret for each issue. It's a riot. The pictures are super and the humor is hip. We'll get some pictures of our business to you soon. Also, how do you pronounce Knuks? Is the first K silent? [Yes! We pronounce it "nux." — Ed.]

...

Keep up the good work. I hope we get to read *Modern Ferret* for many, many years to come.

Yours sincerely,
Paul & Melissa Rosenthal
Delanson, NY

P.S. ...Sammy, Ernie, Nicky and Brandy were too busy wreaking havoc to contribute to this letter.

A NOTE FROM ERIC

Welcome to the latest issue of our work-in-progress. Besides receiving tons of letters, photos, and e-mail from all of you, we've also met many of you at ferret shows! It's great to keep hearing from all of you — your enthusiasm has been terrific! Lately, we've been trying to get out into bookstores and regular magazine racks so we can reach ferret people who don't know about the ferret clubs, shows, etc. So if you meet a ferret owner who hasn't heard of us, be sure to let them know!

Write to us!
Modern Ferret
PO Box 338
Massapequa Park
N.Y. 11762
or
ModFerret@aol.com

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- Velcro harness & leash sets
- Tee shirts - Sweat Shirts (for humans)
- Tee shirts for Ferrets (with cute sayings on Em')
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- Bumper stickers-over 50 to choose from
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- Ferret pins
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- Ferret exercise balls
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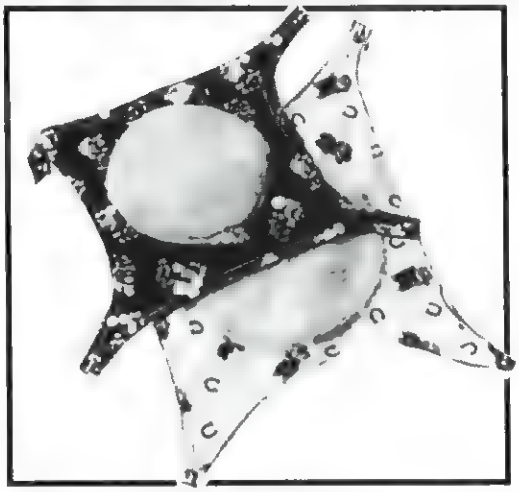

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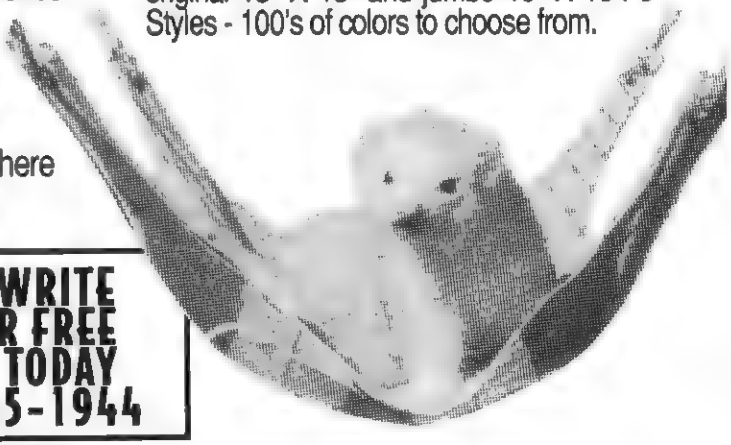

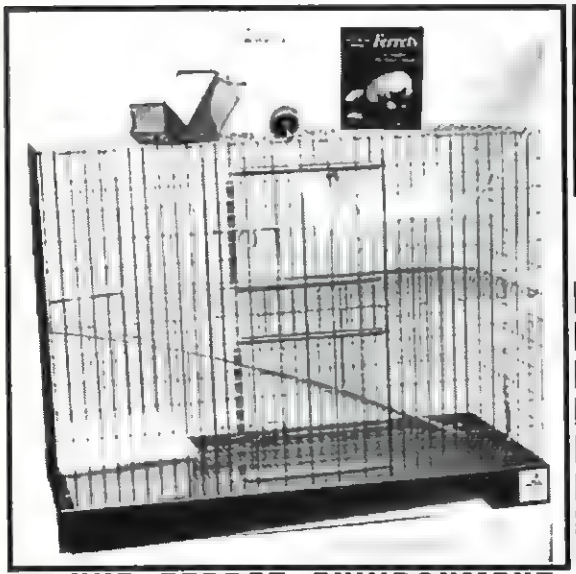

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Peter Koch with a Tower Cage

CAGE CRAFT

Cage-Building With Peter Koch

Peter Koch doesn't build ferret cages, he builds ferret homes. With names like Townhouse, Silo, Tower, and Pagoda, Peter's cages are a combination of wire-working and architecture. "You don't want something that you have to hide in the corner. I like to make it as attractive as possible," he says. But Peter doesn't offer beauty at the expense of high-quality materials. Indeed, the wire Peter uses is not only shinier and more attractive than what many cage manufacturers use, it is also stronger.

Early on when ferret cages were hard to find, Peter bought and resold manufactured cages. But, being a person who has high quality standards, he was not satisfied with the caliber of the cages. So, without any prior wire-working experience, Peter began building cages. He had examined the construction of some cages he liked, though he never had the opportunity to take them apart. He bought some wire and began to experiment on his own. The wire Peter uses is galvanized after welding, which means the wire is welded into a grid and then galvanized. Many cages are made with wire which is galvanized before it's welded: "you see all the black spots where the wire crosses where they burned all the galvanization off, and that's where I found most of my cages were rusting," he says. Peter makes the floors of some of his cages out of plastic-coated wire, which is rust-resistant and easy to clean. Despite its positive points, Peter doesn't recommend using the plastic-coated wire for the whole cage because ferrets tend to bite their cages.

Every cage Peter builds is custom cut and assembled by hand. Although he cuts out 4 or 5 cages at one time, the roof has to be specially cut to fit. Peter explains, "you've got to be careful because it bends. You get a 45-degree angle on one side, you get a 50-degree angle on this side — that looks awkward. It isn't that noticeable, but it is noticeable to me." Peter's not the only one inspecting the cages. There's also Max, a ferret who checks out every cage while Peter is building it, making all of Peter's cages ferret-approved.

When designing a cage, Peter says, "I try to put myself into a ferret's position. I say 'Where could I go where he can't reach me?' And that's how I design." Anyone can reach any spot in Peter's cages, a design feature which makes them easy to clean. Some people have voiced concern over another aspect of the cage design — the angle of the ramps. But Peter points out, "When I build cages and the ferrets are loose, they climb up on the outside, straight up — vertical. Why should I have a ramp that goes 45 degrees so the ferret rolls itself up and doesn't use the muscles? When it's steep, the ferret has to use the muscles, and yet it's safe to climb up."

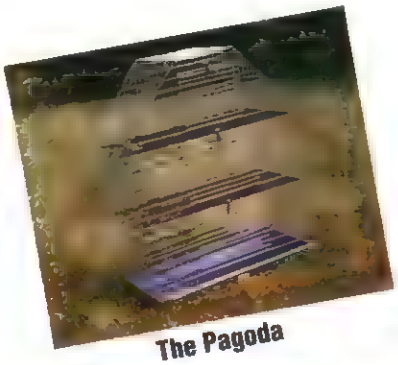
Peter will not make a cage that's wider than the standard door opening (30 inches). He explains that firemen will only remove a cage that fits easily through a door. "If there's a fire, an animal will die in the blaze because the firemen can't take the cage out. They won't take an animal out of the cage." The longest he'll make a cage is 4 feet, and the highest is a about 60 inches. "But you can get that through any door. That's my main concern," Peter emphasizes.

Generally, Peter will honor customers' special requests, but sometimes he tries to talk them out of things he doesn't think will work. He likes to make cages his customers can use: If they can't use the cages, they won't be happy (not to mention the waste of time and material). Sometimes the customer insists and Peter obliges. But nine times out of ten, he says, they agree with him. He says, "I'm out to give the people their money's worth and the best product I can." For Peter, cage-making is a sort of hobby. Although he does make a profit on the cages, he says, "mostly my concern is that the animals are happy and the people are happy. I enjoy doing this kind of work."

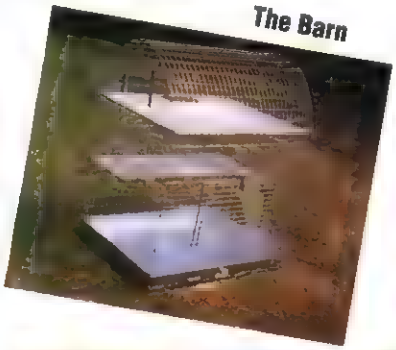
Some of the features of Peter's cages come from ideas from other ferret owners. For example, some customers said they had problems pulling out the bottom pan to clean it. Peter considered the problem, then added a knob to make removing the pan easier. Peter also gets ideas from sketching to see what kind of modifications he can make to designs he has already created. "Like the Townhouse. What would happen if I crushed the top in a little and made it a little different? That's how I came up with the Pagoda." With all his unique cage designs, Peter has begun the laborious process of obtaining patents. Currently, he has 14 patents pending.

The next design Peter is contemplating is a cage in the shape of a castle. He's concerned that the corners will be difficult to shape. He also says that, with the materials he'll need to make it, the price may be a bit high. "Someday I'll come up with something like that," he says. "Once in a while at work, I sketch something and I mill around with it for a while. Then one night I'll come home from work and say: 'Let me try this.' That's how I come up with new things once in a while."

Contact Peter Koch at Friends of Ferrets Shelter & Rescue, 490 Flock Road, Mercerville NJ 08619-1438. Or call 609-586-0007.



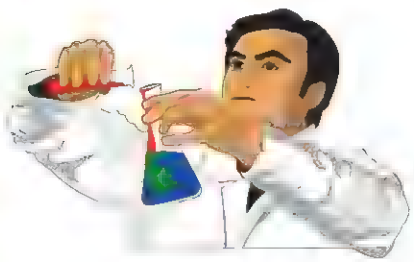
The Pagoda



The Barn

Cage Inspection

Peter with buddy Max



DOCTOR TO DOCTOR™

Lymphosarcoma: Symptoms and Treatment

By Dr. Bruce Williams

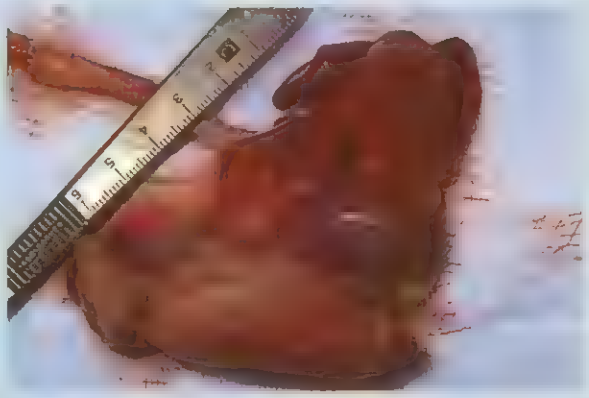
Lymphosarcoma is the most common hematopoietic neoplasm in the ferret as well as most other animal species, and in ferrets it is the most common malignancy. While a fair amount of literature is available on this disease, we actually know very little and, unfortunately, save few cases.

The frequency of this neoplasm certainly appears to be on the rise. Practitioners and pathologists alike report an increased incidence of lymphosarcoma over the last few years — up to one to two cases weekly in some practices.[1] Although the increased incidence of lymphosarcoma and occasional clustering of cases has led to speculation of a viral cause,[3,4] to date, a causative agent has not been isolated.

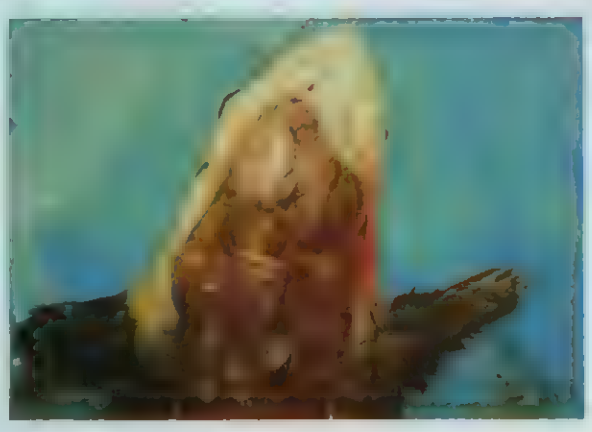
Lymphosarcoma can occur in various forms. Basically, there are two clinical presentations of lymphosarcoma in the ferret: 1) a rapidly progressive lymphoblastic form which is most common in ferrets under 2 years of age, and 2) a more chronic lymphocytic form which affects ferrets 5-7 years of age.[3]

The "classic" form of lymphosarcoma, which causes marked enlargement of the peripheral nodes, is seen in older animals and has the more prolonged course of the two syndromes. In this disease, an infiltrate of small mature lymphocytes expands the peripheral and mesenteric nodes, eventually effacing nodal architecture. Late in the course of disease, neoplastic lymphocytes infiltrate visceral organs (including the liver, kidney, lungs, and spleen) resulting in organ failure and death. This disease is usually insidious, resulting in little clinical debility until extensive infiltration of visceral organs has occurred.

The lymphoblastic form, which affects ferrets aged 1-2 years, is quite different. In this disease, large immature lymphocytes quickly infiltrate the viscera, including the thymus, spleen, liver, and many other organs. Little to no lymph node replacement is seen in these cases, a finding which results in a high rate of misdiagnosis by clinicians without extensive ferret experience. This form of lymphosarcoma can take myriad clinical appearances depending on which



Massively enlarged thymus (with attached heart and lungs) due to lymphoblastic lymphosarcoma in an 8-month old ferret showing severe dyspnea.



5-year-old ferret exhibiting massively enlarged cervical lymph nodes characteristic of the lymphocytic form of lymphosarcoma.

Attention: Veterinarians

You could be doing more than just *reading* Doctor to Doctor — You could be *publishing* in Doctor to Doctor!

Modern Ferret welcomes previously unpublished articles from veterinarians for the *Doctor to Doctor* section. For submission guidelines, write to: Mary Shefferman, Editor, *Modern Ferret* Magazine, PO Box 338, Massapequa Park, NY 11762, or call 516-799-1364 (fax: 516-797-4021; e-mail: modferret@aol.com).

organs are involved. One of the more common presentations results in dyspnea and is often diagnosed as cardiomyopathy[4] or pneumonia. The lesion in this syndrome is actually a rapidly growing thymic mass which compresses the lungs. Less commonly, extensive hepatic infiltration by neoplastic lymphocytes may result in marked hepatic enzyme increases and icterus, suggesting fulminant liver disease, and so on. Lymphoblastic lymphosarcoma should always be ruled out when dealing with any serious illness in young ferrets.

Finally, leukemic forms, in which neoplastic lymphocytes circulate within the peripheral blood, may be seen in the latter stages of either form of lymphosarcoma, but are generally uncommon.[2]

Lymphosarcoma in many cases is not an easy diagnosis. Definitive diagnosis requires interpretation of a lymph node aspirate or biopsy, as aspirate of pleural effusion, or rarely, that of a cutaneous or subcutaneous mass.[2] While the presence of a monomorphic population of immature lymphocytes on a lymph node aspirate is highly suggestive of this disease, the opinion of a pathologist with ferret experience should be sought in all cases. Alternatively, a diagnosis may be made on biopsies of visceral organs in animals with disseminated disease, with the spleen probably yielding the highest number of positive aspirates or biopsies.

During the past few years, a disturbing trend in diagnosis of this disease has been emerging: the interpretation of elevated lymphocyte counts as evidence of lymphosarcoma in the ferret. While many cases of lymphosarcoma may exhibit a lymphocytosis on the complete blood count (CBC), similar changes in the differential may be seen in any number of chronic smoldering infections, most notably gastric *Helicobacter mustelae* infection. The prudent practitioner requires a diagnosis by aspirate or surgical biopsy before any treatment is started.

Several protocols have been published for the treatment of lymphosarcoma in the ferret[4,5]; however, the owner should be told of the poor prognosis before instituting any type of chemotherapy. A protocol consisting of prednisone at 1 mg/kg PO SID will induce initial clinical improvement and a marked decrease in the size of peripheral nodes, but the vast majority of these animals will return within 4-6 weeks with disseminated disease which is refractory to further prednisone treatment. The most popular aggressive protocol consists of a combination of intravenously administered chemotherapeutic agents — vincristine, asparaginase, cyclophosphamide, and doxorubricin (coupled with daily oral prednisone) over a 14-week period.[5] Aggressive treatment appears to produce a higher rate of remission than the less aggressive protocols.[1,2,5]

It is important, however, that veterinarians use caution when administering chemotherapy to ferrets. A complete physical examination, CBC, chemistry panel, and bone marrow evaluation should be performed as baseline testing on all potential chemotherapy patients. CBC's should also be performed prior to each treatment to monitor for potential adverse side effects. Intravenous administration of chemotherapeutic agents should be accomplished only via the use of indwelling IV catheters in patients under general anesthesia.

In summary, practitioners who treat ferrets are certain to encounter lymphosarcoma on a regular basis. it is important to remember several factors when such cases are presented for evaluation and treatment. The younger the ferret at presentation, the more rapid the disease progression, and the less favorable the prognosis. Young ferrets often present with signs of heart failure or respiratory disease due to the presence of a rapidly growing thymic mass. The diagnosis of lymphosarcoma is based on the presence of a monomorphic population of blastic lymphocytes on a fine-needle aspirate or surgical biopsy of a lymph node or, less commonly, a visceral organ; it is not based on changes seen on a CBC. While prednisone may result in initial clinical improvement, more aggressive forms of chemotherapy increase the chances of inducing remission. Finally, all ferrets with lymphosarcoma should be given a poor prognosis before any treatment protocol is initiated.

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VETERINARIANS' NOTICES:

Dr. Bruce Williams will be the course director for the Current Veterinary Care for the Domestic Ferret conference on November 12, 1995. Veterinarians should call 1 (800) FERRET2 and leave an evening phone number to receive more information on this important conference.

Veterinarians interested in obtaining *Modern Ferret* information flyers for their clients should call *Modern Ferret* at (516) 799-1364.

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NEWS NEWS NEWS

Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) & Ferrets

Does the HSUS like our pets? According to HSUS spokesperson Rachel Lamb: "We do not support the legalization of ferrets in California and we have tried to stop and prohibit the ownership of ferrets in other states." This statement was made on a May 31, 1995, broadcast of CBS This Morning which included misleading information about ferrets. Many viewers wrote to CBS to express their outrage with the segment and to request a more accurate report on ferrets.

In addition, ferret owners have written to the HSUS to comment on the HSUS "Statement on Ferrets as Companion Animals" (Rev. 10/92). To get a copy of this statement, write to: The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L Street, NW, Washington DC 20037 or call 202-452-1100. If you don't agree with the statement, let the HSUS know. (Paul G. Irwin is the president.)

Remember that your local humane society is not bound by the views of the HSUS and may have a ferret-friendly policy. Ask them. If you don't protect the rights of your pets, no one will.

The Story Of Rip Van Weasel

Story by Mary R. Shefferman
Illustrations by Linda P. Ozelis

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Rip Van Weasel was a mild-mannered and somewhat hen-pecked (or, might one say, ferret-nipped?) ferret, who lived a few years back in the mountains overlooking a mighty river. Rip's wife was always displeased with his behavior—and, to let him know, she'd tug on his ear fiercely or grab him by the scruff, tossing him this way and that. Poor Rip was quite small for a hob, and his wife was the largest jill anyone had ever seen. She had it all over him, which perhaps made the towns-ferrets have even more pity for Rip—seeing as it was an unfair match. Even his name, "Rip," was the doing of his screeching wife: she had torn his ear in pulling at it. No one knows what his name was before but "Rip" seemed to fit him well. Since he was not likely to argue with anyone over anything, it was not likely that Rip would ever be anything but Rip. Some of the other hobs took it for a warning that they should steer clear of jills like Mrs. Van Weasel. What may seem like gentle ear-nibbling can lead to dire results.

The Van Weasel cage was in terrible disrepair, for Rip could not bring himself to do anything on his own behalf. He was always ready to help the other towns-ferrets, though, while his own things fell to pieces. Even Rip's kits were ragged. They hardly bathed and were often seen rolling in the litter-box or out in the mud. Rip's son, also called Rip, was the spit-and-image of his father. Many felt he inherited his father's lazy attitude, too.

Rip's days were spent sleeping, strolling through the town, or talking with the other idle ferrets over at Old Nicky's cage. He didn't have much to do with working, it seemed no matter what he did, his wife would shriek and scold him. So he simply set about to get through his life without crossing his wife too often. In the group of ferrets at Old Nicky's cage, there was the schoolteacher Van Mustela, who would talk about all the current events, using words that no one could understand. And, of course, Old Nicky, a quiet old ferret who made his opinions known by which bodily function he chose to demonstrate. If he blew a puff from his scent glands, the group knew he did not agree with what the speaker was saying; if he agreed, he simply hiccuped.

Occasionally, Rip would run off into the mountains to frolic in the woods. This was the best way he knew to get away from his disagreeable wife. On one such occasion, Rip ventured higher into the mountains than he ever had before. When he realized how far he'd gone and how late the day had become, he just knew he couldn't get back to his cage by sunset. Oh, how Mrs. Van Weasel would yell at him and nip at his scruff!

As he was trying to decide what to do, he noticed an odd-looking ferret climbing up the mountain carrying a huge bottle that looked very much like Linatone or Ferretone. Rip, who was always ready to help others (and take a few licks of the oily stuff), joined the odd ferret in pushing the bottle up the hill. Onward and upward they pushed, over rocks and up low cliffs, until finally they reached a little hole in the rock. As they had neared the rock, Rip heard the sound of thunder—but it wasn't exactly thunder. He figured it was just one of the weird thunderstorms that sometimes passed through the mountains.

At the hole in the rock, Rip could finally see what was making the noise: A group of strangely colored ferrets pushing marbles over the rock with their noses. When Rip appeared, they suddenly stopped and stared at him. The odd ferret motioned for Rip to give the group of ferrets some of the peculiar oil from the bottle he and Rip had brought up the mountain. Rip was so dazed, he did as he was asked.

After a short time, Rip decided to taste some of the peculiar oil. It was delicious! He drank more and more until his tummy was full of the oil, and he lay down to sleep.

Upon awakening, Rip found himself back in the same spot he had been when he first saw the odd ferret. It was morning and

Rip's legs were stiff from sleeping. He also noticed that he had grown an awfully long beard. Easy-going as Rip was, he figured the strange ferrets from the night before had played a trick on him. He wasn't sure how, but he was sure the peculiar oil had something to do with it. In a moment, he thought of his wife: "Oh, boy is she going to be angry!" he thought. So he began to make his way back to the town and his cage as quickly as he could, considering how old he felt from his night spent outside his cage and without his cozy hammock.

Upon entering the town, Rip was disturbed by how much it had changed overnight. The mountains and the river all looked the same, but the cages were different. And all the ferrets he met were ones he had never seen before. But he passed right by them to get to his cage. When he arrived, he was surprised at how broken down it looked. The door was off the hinge and it was very rusty. He ran inside and called for his wife and kits, but no one answered. He looked at the torn hammock, the cracked food dish, and the litter-box with but one piece of doody—he knew something was wrong.

Out in the street, Rip made his way to what used to be Old Nicky's cage—many of the towns-ferrets began to follow him to find out who he was. When he arrived at the place, the young hobs began asking him all sorts of questions like: "Where did you come from?", "What do you want here?", and "How on earth did you grow a beard!?"

Rip said simply that he came from the mountain and he lived in the town. "The beard," he said, "is a mystery." He then asked for Van Mustela, the schoolteacher.

"Oh," said the hob who seemed most in charge, "he retired a year or so ago to California."

"California!?" Rip shouted. "Has he gone mad!? They'll run him out of town!"

The other ferrets looked at each other. Then the one in charge spoke: "Old ferret, they don't run ferrets out of California anymore! They changed that law years ago. We're as free there as in every other state!"

Rip was confused. He asked for Old Nicky and they told him he had gone to ferret heaven a few years back. Then the oldest ferret in the town, Van Furo, made his way through the crowd. "Who are you?" he asked.

"I'm Rip. Rip Van Weasel," said Rip.

"Rip Van Dyke!? No. I think he's taller than you," said Van Furo.

"Rip Van Weasel," Rip said a little louder.

"Rip Van Halen!?" the Van Furo asked, cocking his head to the left just a bit.

"Weasel! Rip Van Weasel!" Rip shouted.

"Oh! He's over there." Van Furo pointed to a young hob over in the shade, asleep. Sure enough, a ferret who looked just as Rip had the day he went up the mountain was sprawled out with the tip of his tongue sticking out. Then Van Furo told how Rip's father had gone up into the mountains one day and never come back.

Rip said, "I did...I am! I'm back now! Where is my wife?"

Van Furo looked hard at Rip and said, "Yes, you are! Well, why didn't you say so? Welcome back!" He then told Rip that Mrs. Van Weasel had gone off to ferret heaven. It was all Rip could do to seem sad.

Just then, a pretty young jill made her way through the crowd. "I think you are my father," she said. "Why don't you come live with my husband and me? We'll get you your own hammock and we have lots of raisins and Ferretone!"

Rip smiled. "I'll be happy to come live with you, daughter, but I think I'll lay off the Ferretone," he said.

With that, she led old Rip to her lovely cage, making sure to wake up young Rip and bring him along. Rip Van Weasel was happy to spend the rest of his ferret days sleeping and playing with his grand-kits.

Modern Ferret would like to say a huge THANK YOU to Linda Ozelis for her wonderful illustrations. If you're in the Long Island area, she can be found doing pet caricatures some weekends at the Pet Supplies Plus in Westbury N.Y. Stop in and say, "Hi!"

FERRET EVENTS CALENDAR

No show is too big or too small. If your group is having a show, drop us a line with the date, the name of the group and show, and an address or phone number to contact for more information. You can send information to *Modern Ferret*, PO Box 338, Massapequa Park, NY 11762, Attention: Shows; or you can send information via e-mail to: ModFerret@aol.com; or you can call 516-799-1364. We have attempted to list every event we could find info on, please let us know about any we are missing.

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September 16 & 17
Frettchen-Club Berlin e.V.
Contact: Karin Schneider
Fuchsienweg 16 A
12357 Berlin
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September 23
FURO sanctioned
Garden State Ferret Association
New Jersey
609-586-9526

September 23
Ferret Freedom Fiesta '95
Annapolis, MD
Baltimore Ferret Club
2306 Pickwick Rd.
Baltimore, MD 21207
410-448-1281

October 7
Ferret Fiasco
LIFE sanctioned
LOS PA
Croydon, PA
215-946-2747

October 14
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404-442-5917

October 14
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Frederick, MD 21701
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October 15
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October 21
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708-964-GCFA

November 4
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Susquehanna Valley Ferret Club/Cumberland Valley Ferret Club
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November 11-12
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Modern Ferret's Mission Statement

Modern Ferret is a bi-monthly color magazine for ferret owners by ferret owners. We are independent and not affiliated with any group or organization. However, we strongly encourage our readers to become involved with and support any local, regional, or national groups/rescues/shelters they choose. *Modern Ferret* promotes the positive image of domestic ferrets as pets by providing a popular forum for the discussion of ferret-related issues. Our editorial focus is the enjoyment of the ferret as a pet. We'll provide ferret-oriented entertainment such as interviews and articles about movies, tricks, photography, traveling, pet care, new products, and more. We'll also serve as a forum for presenting the latest medical information about ferrets—on both the veterinary and pet-owner levels. We'll produce quality products to further promote ferrets as enjoyable and popular pets. We hope to raise the general public's awareness and education level about ferrets as pets by providing a vibrant forum with a visual appeal. Our graphics will try to capture the fun-loving, playful nature of ferrets in every issue. ***For ferret owners. By ferret owners.™***

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The recent article on us in the *New York Times* has brought to light some surprising information. Several people have called who are members of ferret clubs or groups who have never heard of *Modern Ferret* Magazine! Although we have tried to inform every group, there's always the chance that we missed one — if your group doesn't have information about *Modern Ferret* that they are giving out, make sure they get some for their members! By working together, the ferret community can have a color magazine of their own, put together by ferret lovers (us) and addressing the concerns of ferret lovers (you). It's a rare opportunity for owners of a pet to have a magazine put together by fellow owners and lovers of that pet — just look at how dispassionate so many pet magazines are. *Modern Ferret* is the opportunity for every ferret lover to make a difference — start making yours today!

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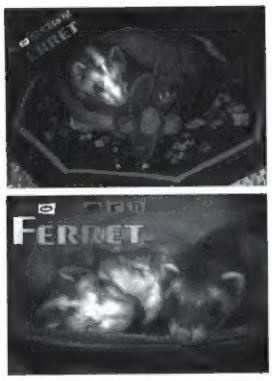

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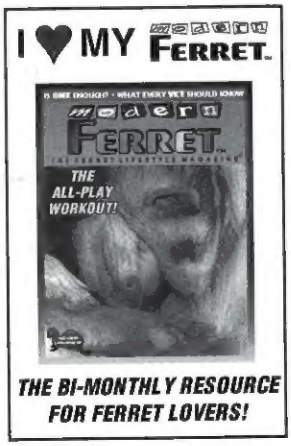

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